

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 BUCAR 03251 01 OF 02 151312Z
ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-10
L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15 ICA-11
TRSE-00 OMB-01 EA-10 HA-05 IO-13 BIB-01 /096 W
-----104193 151346Z /72

R 151121Z MAY 78
FM AMEMBASSY BUCHAREST
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9533
INFO AMEMBASSY BELGRADE
AMEMBASSY BERLIN
AMEMBASSY BUDAPEST
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
AMCONSUL MUNICH
AMEMBASSY PRAGUE
AMEMBASSY SOFIA
USMISSION USNATO
AMEMBASSY VIENNA
AMEMBASSY WARSAW

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 BUCHAREST 3251

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PINR, HU, RO, UR, CH, PEPR
SUBJECT: ROMANIAN COUNTERATTACK ON TRANSYLVANIA (AND
BESSARABIA) ON EVE OF CEAUSESCU'S CHINA VISIT

REFS: (A) MUNICH 2125 (NOTAL), (B) VIENNA 4024 (NOTAL),
(C) BUDAPEST 1711 (NOTAL), (D) BUCHAREST 1278 (NOTAL)

1. SUMMAYR. MIHNEA GHEORGHIU'S ATTACK ON GYULA ILLYES IN
MAY 6 WRITERS' UNION WEEKLY LUCEAFARUL IS MOST POINTED
ROMANIAN RIPOSTE SO FAR TO AGITATION OVER TRANSYLVANIAN
MINORITY EMANATING FROM BUDAPEST, AND IS BEING SUPPLEMENTED
BY OTHER WARNING SIGNALS TO BOTH HUNGARIANS AND SOVIETS
(OVER BESSARABIA) IN ROMANIAN PRESS. AT LUNCH MAY 12,
GHEORGHIU MADE CLEAR THAT BIG PICTURE FOR HIM INCLUDES
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 BUCAR 03251 01 OF 02 151312Z

CEAUSESCU VISIT TO CHINA--WITH MAY 11 HUNGARIAN, CZECHO-
SLOVAK AND BULGARIAN PRESS ATTACKS AND NEW USSURI BORDER
INCIDENT--AGAINST HISTORICAL PATTERN OF HUNGARIAN MINORITY
AGITATION AT HIGHPOINTS OF ROMANIAN FOREIGN POLICY INDEPEN-
DENCE. WE SUSPECT GHEORGHIU'S SLASH AT ILLYES WAS PRO-
VOKED AS MUCH BY HIS POSSIBLE ROLE IN VENTILATING ALLEGED
RECENT MINORITY COMPLAINTS TO WESTERN PRESS AS BY DECEMBER-

JANUARY ARTICLES. COUNTERAGITATION ON BESSARABIA, SUPPLEMENTED BY COUNTERCAMPAIGN DIRECTED AT WESTERN PUBLIC OPINION, WOULD BE "CLASSIC" ROMANIAN RESPONSE. END SUMMARYR.

2. AT DCM'S MAY 12 LUNCHEON FOR VISITING EUR/EE DEPUTY DIRECTOR SCHMIDT, MIHNEA GHEORGHIU REITERATED SOME POINTS AND EXPANDED ON OTHERS IN HIS ATTACK ON HUNGARIAN POET GYULA ILLYES IN MAY 6 EDITION OF WRITERS' UNION WEEKLY LUCEAFARUL. GHEORGHIU IS RCP CC FULL MEMBER AND CHAIRMAN OF ACADEMY OF SOCIAL AND POLITICAL SCIENCES, WITH RANK OF MINISTER. SINCE HE NOTED REF HAD ANNOUNCED MAY 12 EVENING BROADCAST WOULD BE DEVOTED TO HIS ARTICLE, WE ASSUME FBIS HAS CARRIED FULL TEXT.

3. FOR BENEFIT OF ADDRESSEES OTHER THAN DEPARTMENT AND MUNICH, GHEORGHIU'S PIECE IS FULL-FLEDGED, PASSIONATE, POINTED AND AD HOMINEM SLASH AT ILLYES FOR DECEMBER-JANUARY MAGYAR NEMZET ARTICLES AND SUBSEQUENT STATEMENTS TO WESTERN MEDIA ON HUNGARIAN MINORITY IN EUROPE AND ESPECIALLY TRANSYLVANIA; AT SAME TIME, IT ALSO CITES HUNGARIAN-LANGUAGE MATERIAL ON SAME THEME FROM BOTH BUDAPEST AND CANADA. ENTITLED "THE HUNS IN PARIS" AFTER EARLY POST-WAR NOVEL BY ILLYES, ARTICLE PAINTS HIM AS MESSIANIC REACTIONARY, BITTER AT RESULTS OF TWO WORLD WARS, PURPOSEFULLY STIRRING UGLY NATIONALIST EMBERS IN BALKANS. GHEORGHIU TAKES SPECIAL UMBRAGE AT ILLYES' ALLEGATIONS IN CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 BUCAR 03251 01 OF 02 151312Z

MAGYAR NEMZET THAT TREATMENT OF NATIONAL MINORITIES IN ROMANIA RESEMBLES SOUTH AFRICAN APARTHEID AND THAT EUROPE'S HUNGARIAN MINORITY IS OPPRESSED "IN NAME OF SOCIALISM."

4. SECOND MAIN THRUST OF ARTICLE, HOWEVER, IS THAT ILLYES IS DOING OTHERS' DIRTY WORK: INNUENDOS ON ILLYES' OUTSIDE SUPPORTERS AND ENCOURAGERS (WITH SOVIETS ALL BUT NAMED) ABOUND. WITH REGARD TO ILLYES' BBC INTERVIEW DENYING THAT ARTICLES HAD PRIOR APPROVAL OF "CERTAIN AUTHORITIES," GHEORGHIU NOTES SKEPTICALLY "WE MUST BELIEVE HIM."

5. THIRD MAIN THRUST IS TOWARD U.S., AND IT IS APPARENT BOTH DIRECTLY AND IN REFERENCE POINTS OF POLEMIC. GHEORGHIU REITERATES CEAUSESCU'S STATEMENTS TO BARBARA WALTERS--THAT WE WISHED ALL NATIONALITIES HAD AT LEAST AS MANY RIGHTS AS NATIONALITIES ENJOY IN ROMANIA--AND TO HEARST CORRESPONDENT JOHN WALLACH--THAT ROMANIANS WERE MISTAKEN IN HOPING FACTS WILL SPEAK FOR THEMSELVES TO U.S. PUBLIC OPINION ON THIS ISSUE, AND WILL HAVE TO MAKE A BIGGER EFFORT TO INFORM IT. ANY AMERICAN MINORITY--ROMANIANS, GREEKS, JEWS, POLES--WHICH CLAIMED IT DID NOT NEED TO SPEAK LOCAL LANGUAGE OR

RESPECT LAWS OF COUNTRY, BUT PREFERRED TO LISTEN TO
APPEALS FROM ABROAD, WOULD MEET "WALL OF RIDICULE AND
REFUSAL." ILLYES IS TYPICAL OF ARTISTS WHO DISCOVER HISTORIC
MISSION AT END OF CREATIVE CAREERS, LIKE JOHN WILKES BOOTH.
FINALLY, U.S. AND USSR ARE NEATLY WRAPPED TOGETHER IN
PARAPHRASE OF CEAUSESCU'S REFERENCE TO "MESS OF LENTILS
OR GOULASH" IN MARCH 13 SPEECH TO NATIONALITIES COUNCILS
HERE, WHEN GHEORGHIU SPEAKS OF "THOSE (HUNGARIAN EMIGRES)
WHO HAVE SOLD OUT FOR 'MESS OF GOULASH' OF UNITED STATES,
WITH THEIR LIES. NOR HAVE THE AMERICANS UNDERSTOOD
VERY WELL WHAT THEIR PATRONS AND FRIENDS WANT."

6. AT MAY 12 LUNCHEON, GHEORGHIU SAID HE HAD MET ILLYES
IN PARIS IN EARLY POSTWAR PERIOD, BUT NOT SINCE. ILLYES WAS
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 04 BUCAR 03251 01 OF 02 151312Z

LAST OF GIANTS IN HUNGARIAN LITERATURE, HAD BEEN A KIND
OF ANTI-HORTHY AND ANTI-NAZI HUNGARIAN NATIONALIST, WAS
RATHER DEMOCRATIC IN HIS INCLINATIONS, AND ABSOLUTELY
SINCERE. BUT "IN LAST FOUR OR FIVE YEARS," ILLYES HAD
ALSO FALLEN PREY--LIKE MANY OLD MEN, ESPECIALLY OLD
ARTISTS--TO TEMPTATION TO DEVELOP A HISTORIC MISSION FOR
HIMSELF; HE WAS EGGED ON BY YOUNG IDOLATORS, "MOSTLY
FROM ABROAD;" AND IT IS HARD TO SPEAK OF "EAST" AND "WEST"
WHEN SPEAKING OF "ABROAD," SINCE EVEN GERMANS ADMIT THERE
ARE SCORES OF "EASTERN CENTERS" IN FRG.

CONFIDENTIAL

NNN

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 BUCAR 03251 02 OF 02 151334Z
ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-10
L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15 ICA-11
TRSE-00 OMB-01 EA-10 HA-05 IO-13 BIB-01 /096 W
-----104304 151345Z /72

R 151121Z MAY 78
FM AMEMBASSY BUCHAREST
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9534
INFO AMEMBASSY BELGRADE
AMEMBASSY BERLIN
AMEMBASSY BUDAPEST

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
AMCONSUL MUNICH
AMEMBASSY PRAGUE
AMEMBASSY SOFIA
USMISSION USNATO
AMEMBASSY VIENNA
AMEMBASSY WARSAW

C O N F I D E N T I A L FINAL SECTION OF 2 BUCHAREST 3251

U. FURTHER, GHEORGHU WENT ON, HE READS DAILY EXTRACTS OF PRESS, AVAILABLE TO THOSE OF MINISTER RANK, AND FINDS IT "REMARKABLE" THAT MAY 11 HUNGARIAN, CZECHOSLOVAK AND BULGARIAN PRESS ALL CARRY SIMILAR OR IDENTICAL ARTICLES ATTACKING CHINESE, ON VERY EVE OF CEAUSESCU'S DEPARTURE FOR PEKING. THIS "COINCIDENCE" IS TOPPED OFF BY SOVIET-INITIATED BORDER INCIDENT ON USSURI, AGAINST WHICH CHINESE HAVE ALREADY PROTESTED OFFICIALLY.

8. HISTORICAL PATTERN OF HUNGARIAN AGITATION ON TRANSYLVANIA WHENEVER ROMANIANS DEMONSTRATE FOREIGN POLICY INDEPENDENCE, ESPECIALLY WITH REGARD TO CHINA, IS CLEAR ENOUGH. FROM ROMANIAN POINT OF VIEW, IT MAKES LITTLE DIFFERENCE WHETHER SOVIETS ARE PROVOKING AGITATION--WHICH HE DOUBTED--OR SIMPLY LETTING IT HAPPEN, SINCE EFFECT (AND INTENT) ARE THE SAME.
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 BUCAR 03251 02 OF 02 151334Z

9. REMINDED THAT THERE IS A REAL SITUATION IN TRANSYLVANIA ITSELF, GHEORGHU SAID THIS WAS TRUE, BUT SITUATION IS TERRIBLY MISUNDERSTOOD. ROMANIA MAY NOT BE "FREE COUNTRY," BY WESTERN CONCEPTIONS, BUT SITUATION IS SAME FOR ALL ROMANIAN CITIZENS, ROMANIAN, HUNGARIAN OR WHATEVER. FURTHER, IT IS VITCLLY IMPORTANT TO LOOK AT SITUATION FROM DEVELOPMENT ANGLE: STANDARD OF LIVING IS LOWER THAN ELSEWHERE, BUT UNTIL IT CAN BE SAID THAT HUNGARIAN IS WORSE OFF THAN ROMANIA, IN HOUSING, SALARY, EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITY ETC., BECAUSE RPT BECAUSE HE IS HUNGARIAN, THERE IS NO DISCRIMINATION, AND THIS CANNOT BE SAID. REMINDED OF HIGHER LIVING STANDARDS IN HUNGARY, GHEORGHU FIRST RESPONDED THAT PERHAPS THEY ARE HIGHER IN HUNGARY BECAUSE THEY ARE LOWER IN KIEV. BUT THAT IS NOT THE POINT, HE CONTINUED: POINT IS THAT UNLIKE ROMANIA GERMANS, ROMANIAN MAGYARS DO NOT WISH TO LEAVE, AND SO LONG AS THEY ELECT TO STAY, THEY MUST ACCEPT CONDITIONS OF COUNTRY THEY HAVE CHOSEN. CEAUSESCU COULD SOLVE PROBLEM BY OFFERING KADAR A MILLION MAGYARS TOMORROW, AND KADAR WOULD NOT TAKE THEM.

10. ON HIS ARTICLE, AGHEORGHU INSISTED HE HAD NOT HAD "OPPORTUNITY" TO DISCUSS IT WITH PEOPLE "MORE AUTHORITATIVE"

THAN HIMSELF, BUT HAD WRITTEN IT IN HASTE AND BEEN ABLE TO PUBLISH IT BECAUSE HE IS CHAIRMAN OF EDITORIAL BOARD OF LUCEAFARUL. ON RFE COVERAGE, HE SAID HE HAD FOUND IT VERY BALANCED AND MODERATE. HE KNOW MOST OF THE ROMANIANS WORKING AT RFE, AND THEY HAD NO MORE INTEREST IN STIRRING NATIONALISM THEN HE DID.

11. CONCURRENTLY, WARNING SIGNALS DIRECTED AT BOTH HUNGARY AND USSR ARE FLICKERING UP IN ROMANIAN PRESS. SAME MAY 6 LUCEAFARUL THAT CARRIED GHEORGHU INCLUDED FRONG-PAGE APPRECIATION
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 BUCAR 03251 02 OF 02 151334Z

OF TRANSYLVANIEZ POET OCTAVIAN GOGA, KNOWN AS MAGYAR-EATER AND LONG IN LIMBO FOR THIS REASON AS WELL AS RIGHT-WING POLITICS IN INTERWAR PERIOD (ALTHOUGH APPRECIATION MENTIONS NEITHER ASPECT). MAY 7 SCINTEIA CARRIES FRONG-PAGE COMMENTARY ON EXPANDING INTERNATIONAL CULTURAL TIES BY OVID CROHMALNICEANU, IN WHICH HE COMPLAINS ABOUT IGNORANCE OR ROMANIAN LITERATURE ABROAD, INCLUDING U.S., AND TAKES SPECIAL SWIPE AT "RACIAL AND CHAUVINIST PREJUDICES, TASTE FOR WORLD SUPREMACY, NATIONALIST MEGALOMANIA OR ETHNIC MESSIANISM." CROHMALNICEANU IS WELL-KNOWN LITERARY HISTORY PROFESSOR AND CRITIC, BUT IS ESPECIALLY WELL-KNOWN FOR JEWISH-BESSARABIAN ORIGIN, AND BECAUSE HE DELIVERED REBUTTAL TO MOSCOW LITERATURNAYA GAZETA'S ATTACK SOME YEARS AGO ON MARIN PREDA'S NOVEL "DELIRUL," WHICH INAUGURATED ONGOING REEVALUATION OF MARSHAL ANTONESCU AS NATIONAL LEADER (1940-1944). GHEORGHU MENTIONED THAT CROHMALNIECEANU IS HIS NEIGHBOR, IN SAME APARTMENT HOUSE. MORE DIRECTLY (IF STILL INDIRECTLY), MAY 11 WEEKLY ROMANIA LITERARA CARRIED LONG POEM BY ALEXANDRU PHILIPPIDE NOTING ONE OF HIS (GREEK) ANCESTORS DIED AS HEGUMEN OF A "MONASTERY IN BESSARABIA, BY THE PRUTH" AND EVOKING BOTH THE DEEP FORESTS OF BUKOVINA AND NATIONAL POET EMINESCU'S LAMENT DOINA BY NAME. TEXT OF DOINA, WHICH HAS APPARENTLY NOT BEEN PRINTED IN ROMANIA AT LEASE SINCE EARLY POWTWAR PERIOD, BEGINS "FROM THE DNIESTER TO THE TISZA (I.E. FROM BESSARABIA WELL INTO PRESENT-DAY HUNGARY) ALL ROMANIANS COMPLAINED TO ME."

12. COMMENT. TIMING SUGGESTS THAT GHEORGHU'S ATTACK ON ILLYES WAS INSPIRED AS MUCH BY LATTERS POSSIBLE ROLE AS CONDUIT INTO WESTERN PRESS FOR RECENT ALLEGED COMPLAINTS BY ROMANIAN MAGYAR INTELLECTUALS (REFS A AND B) AS BY ILLYES' ORIGINAL ARTICLES AT TURN OF YEAR, ALTHOUGH GHEORGHU DID NOT MENTION RECENT FLAREUP. RE LATTER, UK EMBASSY REPORTS THAT HM AMBASSADOR TO BUDAPEST PARSONS, VISITING BUCHAREST, SAID MAY 8 WAS SATISFIED THAT MATERIALS ON TRANSYLVANIAN MINORITY REACHING WESTERN CORRESPONDENTS IN BUDAPEST WERE
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 04 BUCAR 03251 02 OF 02 151334Z

DOING SO WITH CONNIVANCE OF HUNGARIAN AUTHORITIES. IN
SAME VEIN, FRENCH EMBASSY REPORTS FRENCH HAVE BEEN TOLD
BY AUTHER OF RECENT LE MONDE ARTICLE ON SAME COMPLAINTS
THAT HE IS SURE MATERIAL REACHING CORRESPONDENTS IN VIENNA
IS PUT AT THEIR DISPOSAL BY HUNGARIANS. IN THIS SITUATION,
GIVEN LINK THEY SEE WITH CEAUSESCU VISIT TO CHINA, CLASSIC
ROMANIAN RIPOSTE WOULD BE COUNTERAGITATION ON BESSARABIA,
SUPPLEMENTED BY COUNTERCAMPAIGN IN WESTERN PUBLIC
OPINION. BOTH MAY ALREADY HAVE BEGUN.
AGGREY

CONFIDENTIAL

NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: PROPAGANDA, FOREIGN RELATIONS, CHIEF OF STATE VISITS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 15 may 1978
Decaption Date: 01 jan 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 20 Mar 2014
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1978BUCHAR03251
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D780205-0230
Format: TEL
From: BUCHAREST
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t19780560/aaaabyjg.tel
Line Count: 292
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: 589b1c9f-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION EUR
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 6
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 78 MUNICH 2125, 78 VIENNA 4024, 78 BUDAPEST 1711, 78 BUCHAREST 1278
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 23 may 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 2695671
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: ROMANIAN COUNTERATTACK ON TRANSYLVANIA (AND BESSARABIA) ON EVE OF CEAUSESCU'S CHINA VISIT
TAGS: PINR, PEPR, PROP, HU, RO, UR, CH, (CEAUSESCU, NICOLAE)
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odbc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/589b1c9f-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Sheryl P. Walter
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
20 Mar 2014
Markings: Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014